

CAREGIVER CONNECTION

MAY 2023

ALS Awareness Month

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis

“ALS is a progressive neurodegenerative disease. People with ALS lose the ability to move, eat, speak, and eventually, to breathe. There is no cure for ALS. Yet.”

“Symptoms can begin in the muscles that control speech and swallowing or in the hands, arms, legs or feet. Not all people with ALS experience the same symptoms or the same sequences or patterns of progression. However, progressive muscle weakness and paralysis are universally experienced.”

“Every May, the ALS community bands together for ALS Awareness Month. Through community events, volunteerism, advocacy work, and donations, we’re doing Whatever It Takes to create a world without ALS.”



“Sometimes it helps to know that I can’t do it all. One step at a time all that’s possible, even when those steps are taken on the run.” – Anne W. Schaeff

Did you know?

“The loss of one’s dreams and the need to alter expectations of what life is going to be like can be a major cause of problems in family relationships. When illness or disability strikes, your vision of the future is turned upside down.”

“Building new dreams is crucial to moving forward. Focusing on what is possible, as opposed to what is not, leads to individual growth, self-respect, and development of relationships on a new footing. But the caregiver and the care receiver may not be ready to build new dreams at the same time. Because of the altered situations in which they find themselves, they may first need to forge a new definition of self. “

“I sometimes suggest that people have a ceremony to grieve over the loss of their dreams,” Ms. Luce continues. “It lets them know it’s okay to be angry and to feel intense sadness. It can also speed them on the way to creating new dreams based on realities, and that really is the key to healing.”

#CaregiverActionNetwork

TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

- Make conscious decisions about the things you can change and let go of the things you can and let go of the things over which you have no control
- Find creative ways to maintain normalcy
- Keep on talking, keep on communicating
- Maintain your individuality, and don’t own a disease or disability that isn’t yours
- Use a support group as a social outlet and network, not just a place to talk about your problems
- Treat your loved one with respect and expect respect in return
- Begin to dream again

VA Providence Caregiver Support
Team

(401) 273-7100 EXT.
14308/13408/13283

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

VA Providence Virtual Caregiver Support Group

Tuesday, May 9th at 11am

Join online at: <https://veteransaffairs.webex.com>

Join by phone toll free by calling: 1-404-397-1596

Meeting Number: 2761 079 4482

Access Code: 2761 079 4482

Sailing in Turbulent Waters: How to Have Positive Conflict Resolution

Caregiver Support Line Telephone Education Group

Conflict in a relationship cannot be avoided. All relationships will come face to face with conflict. Conflict can be destructive if not managed well. Learn the skills to manage conflict in a positive way and make your relationships stronger. This group will help you understand the tools you need to build a bridge of understanding. Join us virtually to learn how to turn your conflicts into a positive experience.

Tuesday, May 2nd at 10am EST

Wednesday, May 10th at 7pm EST

Wednesday, May 17th at 3pm EST

Contact the Providence CSP team to register 401.273.7100 ext. 14308/13408

VA Caregiver Support Program Monthly Spirituality Calls Group

Spirituality can be a major source of strength for Veterans, caregivers and family members. It is an important source of spiritual strength. Each call will open with breathing space exercises. Open discussion to follow. Be inspired and reassured that you are not alone!

May 5th at 12-1230pm

Spirituality and Summer Safety Tips

Join on online at: <https://webex.com>

Meeting number: **2762 030 9378**

Join by phone toll free by calling: **1-833-558-0712**

Access Code: **2762 030 9378**

Or contact the Providence CSP team for more information: 401.273.7100 ext. 14308/13408

The VA Caregiver Center Presents

Anticipatory Grief: Grieving a Loss Before it Happens

No registration required. Caregivers, please join us by phone or online for one of the 1-hour sessions:

May 9th @11am or May 18th @ 3pm

Join online: <https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/meet/linda.nichols>

Meeting Code: 199 230 3350

Join by Phone: 1-888-558-0712

Access Code: 199 230 3350##

VA Caregivers First

A 4 part training program for caregivers of Veterans that helps caregivers learn new skills, practice positive self-care, connect with other caregivers & navigate VA & community resources.

May 3rd

May 8th

May 15th

May 24th

Virtual Meetings at **9am**

To register, contact the Providence CSP team at 401.273.7100 x14308/13408

VA S.A.V.E Suicide Prevention Training for Caregivers

Virtual skills training that provides information and steps anyone can take when a Veteran may be at risk for suicide. S.A.V.E stands for SIGNS, ASK, VALIDATE, ENCOURAGE & EXPEDITE.

May 29th @ 10am

To register, contact the Providence CSP team at 401.273.7100 x14308/13408

RI Elder Info's Caregiver Support Group

This is a facilitated sharing/caring group that gives you time to check in, talk with other caregivers and listen in a group that is non-threatening and supportive. Information and resources provided as needed.

3rd Friday of the month at 10-11am on Zoom

May 19th @ 10am

To register contact Deb Burton at Deb@rielderinfo.com or call 401.585.0509

Parkinson's Disease Caregiver Support Group

American Parkinson Disease Association & HopeHealth present a virtual support group for caregivers of individuals living with Parkinson's Disease.

May 15th 5-630pm

To register, email SupportGroups@HopeHealthCo.org or call 401.415.4664

Mindfulness Meditation for Caregivers

Meditation practice is shown to help with improving concentration, attention, creativity and decreasing anxiety and depression. 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month 1-2pm

May 2nd & May 16th 1-2pm

To register, email SupportGroups@HopeHealthCo.org or call 401.415.4664

RI Elder Info Friday Friends Weekly Livestream

Weekly live-stream podcast featuring organizations YOU NEED to know about
9am Every Friday on RI Elder Info's Facebook & YouTube Pages

Let's Talk: Caregiving Matters

Presentations to inform, support and connect current and future caregivers in our community.

Presentation via Zoom, followed by time to gather with other attendees.

May 2nd- Coping with Change, Loss, and Grief

May 16th- Advance Care Planning

May 30th- Palliative Care for Patients and their Families

Zoom links available: [Featured Programs - Rogers Free Library](#)

LOOKING AHEAD

(contact the VA Providence CSP team to register (401)273-7100 ext. 14308/13408)

- **VA SAVE training for Caregivers** will help you act with care and compassion if you encounter a Veteran who is in crisis or experiencing suicidal thoughts. Join us for one of the following virtual VA SAVE training:
8/22/23 at 130pm
- **Annual Caregiver & Family Resource Fair**
Join the Veterans Health Administration Caregiver Support Program for an opportunity to learn about the wealth of resources available to caregivers and families of Veterans.
VA Providence 6/28/23 at 10am

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 10am CSL Telephone Education 1pm Mindfulness Meditation for Caregivers 3pm Let's Talk: Caregiving Matters Virtual Event	3 9am VA Caregivers First	4	5 12pm CSP Monthly Spirituality Group 9am <u>Friday Friends Weekly Live Stream RI Elder Info</u>	6
7	8 9am VA Caregivers First	9 11am VA Providence Virtual Caregiver Support Group 11am VA "Anticipatory Grief: Grieving a Loss Before It Happens"	10 7pm CSL Telephone Education	11	12 9am <u>Friday Friends Weekly Live Stream RI Elder Info</u>	13
14	15 9am VA Caregivers First 5pm Parkinson's Disease Caregiver Support	16 1pm Mindfulness Meditation for Caregivers 3pm Let's Talk: Caregiving Matters Virtual Event	17 3pm CSL Telephone Education Group	18 3pm VA "Anticipatory Grief: Grieving a Loss Before It Happens"	19 9am <u>Friday Friends Weekly Live Stream RI Elder Info</u> 10am RI Elder Info Caregiver Support Group	20
21	22	23	24 9am VA Caregivers First	25	26 9am <u>Friday Friends Weekly Live Stream RI Elder Info</u>	27
28	29 10am VA SAVE Training	30 3pm Let's Talk: Caregiving Matters Virtual Event	31			



VA S.A.V.E Suicide Prevention Training for Caregivers

A skills training that provides information and steps anyone can take when a Veteran may be at risk for suicide. Caregivers play an important role in suicide prevention. They may be the first to notice changes in the Veteran or may be the one that a Veteran turns to when having suicidal thoughts. It is important that caregivers have the tools they need to intervene. S.A.V.E. stands for signs, ask, validate, encourage and expedite. It provides simple steps that anyone can take when talking with Veterans at risk for suicide.

S.A.V.E. stands for “Signs of suicidal thinking,” “Ask the question,” “Validate the Veteran’s experience,” and “Encourage treatment and expedite getting help.” This training is what is known as “gatekeeper training” and is a recognized best practice in suicide prevention. Gatekeeper training, which imparts basic skills for talking to individuals in crisis, helps prepare members of the public to step in when someone they interact with is experiencing a crisis.

Caregiver Testimonials

“When he says little things like, ‘ugh, I just want to give up,’ then we talk about it. I realize it might not be a passing thought. It makes me talk with him about it... making him aware that he could feel like that and it’s not unusual to feel that way. I just don’t think we really addressed it before we took that training.”

“The warning signals are what I’m looking for. Taking a swim lesson, you know how to save someone or mouth-breathe someone who’s passed out. I felt like education was something, and I’d like to be able to share that with others.”

“VA S.A.V.E. training had information that I had not heard before— phone numbers and access points. And the 988 Veteran’s Crisis hotline—the fact that they simplified it now is way cool in my book.”

Contact the Providence CSP Team for more information
(401) 273-7100 ext. 14308/13408



Community Corner

MEDICARE COUNSELING

MASSACHUSETTS

The SHINE Program (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) provides free health insurance information, counseling and assistance to all Massachusetts residents with Medicare and their caregivers.

How can a SHINE counselor help me?

SHINE counselors can answer your questions about Medicare and also help you make decisions about your benefits.

A SHINE counselor will help you:

- Understand your insurance coverage
- Find the right coverage for you
- Find ways you can save money on your prescription drugs and health insurance
- Help you apply for programs that will lower your costs
- Select the Medicare prescription drug plan that covers your medications

People who have Medicare or who are about to become eligible for Medicare can meet with a counselor to learn about benefits and options available. A counselor will review programs that help people with limited income to pay health care costs.

To find a local SHINE counselor and schedule an appointment, call MassOptions at 1-800-243-4636.

“Like airplane passengers, let’s not forget to put on our own oxygen masks first... we are no good to our loved ones if we collapse under the strain.” – Peter B.

RHODE ISLAND

The **State health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)** provides local, in-depth, and objective insurance counseling and assistance to Medicare-eligible individuals, their families, and caregivers.

RI SHIP Locations:

- Providence: dial 2-1-1 or 462-4444 (POINT)
- Northern RI: (401) 349-5760 x2635
- West Bay: (401) 921-5118
- South County: (401) 789-3016 x2379
- East Bay: (401) 435-7876
- Newport County: (401) 848-4185
- RI SHIP Main Line: 1-800-884-8721

How RI SHIP Can Help Medicare Beneficiaries and Caregivers

- Have you recently lost employer coverage due to COVID-19 and are eligible for Medicare? Contact RI SHIP for remote assistance with reviewing health or prescription drug plan options.
- Worried about the out-of-pocket costs associated with Medicare? Contact RI SHIP to find out about assistance programs you or your loved one might be eligible for.
- Unsure about Medicare’s eligibility criteria? RI SHIP can help you understand the guidelines.
- Wondering what Medicare does and doesn’t cover? Medicare can be complicated. Contact RI SHIP for answers.
- Confused about who pays first, Medicare or another insurance? RI SHIP can explain how Medicare works with supplemental policies, retiree coverage, Medicaid, and other insurers.
- Uncertain of yours or your loved one’s rights, under Medicare? Contact RI SHIP for assistance

Contact our toll free line 888.884.8721 or the [Point](#) for more information

Monthly Insight

Knowing Your Options: Senior/Adult Enrichment/Community Centers

Have you ever been encouraged to reach out to your local “Aging and Disability Resource Center” “Community Center,” “Council on Aging,” or “Adult Enrichment Center?”

These locations are a hub of resources and connection for those living with a disability, or any individual age 50+. Offerings generally include: transportation, meals, health screenings, Medicare counseling, art and fitness classes, social services, recreational outings and activities.

Senior Centers provide outreach to individuals with difficulty leaving their homes as well! They are often a point of enrollment for home delivered meals and volunteer assistance. Many offer caregiver support groups and social services to help determine what specific community resources may be helpful in maintaining wellbeing at home.

Senior centers do not require town residency.

You are free to become a member at any center you prefer.

What does membership mean?

Membership opens doors to participating in offered events, activities/classes, and transportation as available.

You do not need to be a member to ask a question to social services or participate in meal programs.

Centers offer up to date information about local resources and events in your own community.

Many people join simply for access to basic health screenings or tech support. Others keep an eye on the newsletter for outings or events that spark interest. We encourage you to review your local Center calendar for any events or classes that speak to you. You might even find activities or events that you and your Veteran may enjoy doing together.

Annual membership fees vary. Some offer free or discounted membership to town residents. Cost may depend on residency and how many people you enroll. Examples generally range from \$0-15 per individual resident, or \$25 for a non-resident couple. Please call directly or look at your Center’s website for a copy of their membership form.

Adult Day vs. Senior Center Quick Reference		
*Offerings	Adult Day Health Center	Senior Center
Transportation for members	X	X
Meals (at facility or home delivered)	X	X
Caregiver support groups	X	X
Personal care assistance	X	
Supervised day program	X	
Exercise & Wellness activities (yoga, meditation, Zumba)	X	X
Financial literacy classes		X
Medicare/Health Insurance counseling		X
Health screenings (flu shots, blood pressure, and podiatry clinics)		X
Nutrition classes		X
Art activities and classes	X	X
Card groups and games	X	X
Interest & hobby groups		X
Volunteer help & opportunities		X
Technology classes, info & help		X
Social Services (community resource guidance & application help)	X	X
Free Volunteer Tax Preparation		X
<i>*Every center is unique and may not offer the exact same types of groups, clinics, or activities. Be sure to check your local calendar for up to date offerings and registration requirements.</i>		

Where is my local senior center?

RI: Office of Healthy Aging 401-462-3000 www.oha.ri.gov/what-we-do/connect/senior-resource-centers

MA: Massachusetts Councils on Aging 413-527-6425 www.mcoonline.com

CT: Community Choices 1-800-994-9422 www.portal.ct.gov/AgingandDisability/Content-Pages/Main/Programs-and-Services